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THOUGHTS

By LEWIS F. KORNS

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Covering a period of a number of years, these Thoughts were written from day to day, as circumstances arose to give them birth.

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Character

The greatest architecture is building character.

An absurdity---a high social position with a low moral character.

We stand in admiration and amazement at the best in human character and intellect, and in amazement alone at the worst in both.

Beware the man who promises you fair treatment for the future while giving you the worst of a present deal.

There are many people whose measure of character you cannot take fully until after they are married.

To find the size of a big man, test him out in some small transaction.

A great many people stay poor because they will not build up character.

Money often goes to quarreling relatives; good character does not get into the courts for litigation.

A man who is over-bold in the presence of a coarse woman is usually too timid in the presence of a refined one.

A bossy man is usually a cringer before what he thinks is great power.

People who will do unfair things for you are liable to do unfair things against you.

A cartoonist sometimes becomes a character assassin.

The man who says all men have their price, by including himself, shows at least the virtue of frankness.

Some people have enough passion to be human; some have enough to be brutal, and some do not have enough to be either.

A woman who is better than a man simply because her sex imposes penalties for wrong-doing, rarely points the way for bettering men.

No matter what character we have established in the past, our conduct from day to day must justify the confidence of our friends.

Character, like the wireless message, radiates in all directions over land and sea, hill and dale, mountain and valley---silently---unseen---and makes itself manifest beyond the range of sound and vision.

Childhood

All the world worships at the shrine of babyhood.

A woman's whisper and a child's lisp are the farthest carrying sounds in the world.

It is the fate of sex that denies a man expressions of affection for a lovely young lady whom as a child he was privileged to love.

We are more interested in the painting of a dirty faced child than in that of the angel hovering above it.

Crime

Crime is as much a condition as an intention.

Taking foolish chances against danger is taking criminal chances.

A thief is not so hard to deal with as a stingy man, as he has less points of attack.

A man who will not talk will bear watching; criminals are often strangely silent.

We have reason to assume at least capability for the crime when the murder-suspect is the coolest person in the court room.

It is vastly better for society to reform a criminal than to execute him.

Dress

There are certain things that even fashion cannot justify.

Your clothes and your language should be equally fitting.

The more some people spend for clothes the more they drive away favor.

Many people are willing to dress well enough to be dead beats.

The last person to adopt a ridiculous fashion suffers more derision than the one who first adopted it.

Dress inferior to the rest of your family and after a while you will be considered inferior.

Economics

Nothing is too cheap that serves its purpose well.

Our need for a large income depends more on our extravagant tastes than on our real necessities.

We should aim to make use of many seemingly bad things rather than to seek their destruction.

It is not worth while to own anything you do not appreciate.

He is fortunate who wants the things he knows he can have.

There are many things apparently worthless that render a great service to humanity.

The hardest bill to collect is one for damages to property that has been loaned.

It is easier to refuse a friend a loan than to press him for payment.

One who gives all he has will be permitted to languish in the poor-house by those to whom he has given.

The foundation of many a man's wealth is selfishness followed with persistency.

There can be no general prosperity where labor has small reward.

The most wanton torture is that of the rich trying to kill time.

One who is not satisfied with a fair price will not be satisfied with any kind of a price.

Demand without production is helpless; production without demand is useless.

The idealists give us much on which to feed, but if it were not for the utilitarians, they would starve us all.

A country that makes a specialty of climate is like a man who wears a clean shirt a whole week, not much good for anything else.

There is no danger zone surrounding commercial possibilities that man will not cross.

Ethics

In defending your self-respect never fear to make enemies.

Genuine repentance must bear the seal of a corrected life.

One who is severe on wrong-doers may be a wrong-doer in the excess of his severity.

Deal with people not as though they are dishonest, but in a way so that if they turn out to be so, you are safe.

The most charming thing is to win people, never forgetting to leave them the better for the winning.

It is more charitable, and often more in keeping with the truth, to term men's faults only differences.

Fads

Fads are more widely contagious than disease.

Fads have an affinity for most of the human race, whether barbarous or civilized.

Men become less superstitious but more prone to fads as they become higher civilized.

One who changes fads occasionally preserves a better poise than he who keeps one fad all his life.

Friendship

We are fortunate if we can speak to our worst enemies.

We cannot stand the criticisms of our friends and we have no confidence in those of our enemies.

We sometimes spoil a friend by going into business with him.

You need to handle your friends with more diplomacy than you do your enemies.

If you wish to test a friend loan him money.

Government

The final test of civilization of a people is the respect they have for law.

In the final analysis, law is for the protection of man against himself.

The more ignorant a man is the more he thinks he ought to govern someone else.

Unless governed by the law of good manners, we can have anarchy in ordinary conversation.

Representative government can never eliminate the stupendous influence one person will sometimes exercise over the destinies of a nation.

Great wealth and great poverty will disintegrate a nation in about the same time.

After the state, the largest community of interest that has stood the test of time is that of the family.

Industrial

Go among strangers to get a start; among your friends their jealousies will sometimes amount to more than their support.

In accomplishing big things, we dare not pause to observe small niceties.

The way to cure hatred of the rich is to accumulate some property yourself.

One always looking for flaws leaves too little time for construction.

Go where travelers come from to find a prosperous country.

Even a good thing will not always sell; it must be the vogue.

A very poor thing may be the vogue and sell easily.

Watch carefully for the moment when assistance will be regarded as interference.

Carnegie will get quite as many criticisms for the manner of the giving of his fortune as he will for the manner of its making.

Kindness

No person is wholly bad who is kind to any living thing.

A kind heart is the fountain-head of good manners.

There is much kindness in the world, but not enough thoughtful kindness.

If your heart is filled with human sympathy you are sure to have friends.

Keeping secret innocent confidences is like keeping bread to spoil when there are hungry people about.

Expressions of affection should not be delayed until they must be mingled with funeral tears.

We can lighten our troubles greatly by taking a little human interest in those of other people.

We seem to feel keenest the kindness that comes from one who is generally cruel.

Our regrets are the least for those past errors that were made on the side of kindness.

Observations

We should not expect all the present to be as good as the best of the past.

The knowledge that guages our limitations is often highly valuable.

Now and then we meet people whose faults are an interesting study.

Try to feel appreciation at the time you are doing well.

We must accept most great people with great faults.

The word perfection is a badly abused term.

Most people are willing to pay a big price to get something for nothing.

The most thankless task is trying to keep people from being fooled.

We sometimes get badly squeezed between truth and diplomatic diplomacy.

Ofttimes in a negative statement we express a most positive thought.

Sometimes our second impression corrects the first.

The most healthful recompense of love is trust.

Wit can render instant aid or lasting harm.

Unclean people often make a great fuss about dirt.

The more you oppose a crank the more he thinks he is needed.

Sometimes an outside view is better than an inside view.

Soap and the locomotive are among the greatest evangels of civilization.

Some people are more tolerant of evil than they are of honest mistakes.

Your seat is not fully paid for at the box office if you with-hold your enthusiasm from a good actor.

Those things that appeal to our appetite most from youth to old age are either sweet or bitter.

Try to make up your mind early so you will have ample time to change it if necessary.

Sometimes in pleasing ourselves we please others most.

Truth, to my mind, beats fiction for dramatic interest.

It is not safe to pin your faith to a firebrand.

The stingy man thinks all other men either stingy or wasteful.

Some things have no reason for their existence except that they are expensive.

There seems to be wilder enthusiasm over fakes than over square propositions.

Some people express displeasure, seeking to create the impression that they have known better things.

People who are always talking about their old town will praise the new when they return to the old.

When you say of a profile picture that it would be better if front view, you unconsciously admit that the artist has created an impression of beauty.

True art consists in the concealment of art.

Those who will beat us sometimes inspire our confidence easiest.

Rather ask enough questions to offend occasionally than to permit mistakes from asking too few.

You can make more money out of people by pandering to their prejudices than by going against them.

It is hard for people who have nothing to do to get ready for anything on time.

The easiest way for a dullard to get a variation of sensibilities is to get drunk.

Some people judge the value of a picture only by knowing the value of the frame.

Music is the link between earth and heaven.

A woman sees earth and heaven through the affections.

Inconsistency is the price of genius.

There is much in architecture that interests, but so little that satisfies.

Throw wide your curtains and let your light shine out on the world.

People who live on the carline do most running to catch the car.

So many people are afraid that bulldogs and saloons will get hurt.

That a stove should have perfect chimney connections, is a hint to other smokers.

Truth sometimes seems so hard that the soul cries out for the softening influence of a miracle.

One test of strength is the ability to take defeat graciously.

We must brave much criticism of our own generation if we wish the favor of posterity.

Steps slightly out of time save the bridge.

Machinery that runs smooth runs cold.

Right questions rightly asked are taken as a compliment.

If you do not appreciate what you now have you will never appreciate what you will have.

It is necessary for some people to go away from home to see how much they do not like.

The finer house you build the sharper will be the criticism.

There are times when it is quite as easy to look ahead as it is too look back.

The desire to have short visits prolonged is a strong recommendation for them.

Sometimes one does not like the right thing if it comes suddenly after long experience with the wrong.

Anything too sweet is liable to sour.

Music serves no other purpose with some people than to keep either their feet or their tongues going.

When one has an axe in his hand he should approach a tree with a prayer on his lips.

What we do not do for people there can be no quarrel about the manner of its doing.

Those people interest us most who have both ideas and ideals.

Some people have a way of making their faults pleasing, while others have a way of making their virtues repulsive.

A man is liable to think he is a charmer in the presence of a gracious woman.

To win a woman's highest devotion a man must be just, tender, and a shade imperious.

Some things are striking and show great strength simply because they are inharmonious.

Parenthood

Parenthood is but a shame if the parents do not fully discharge their duty in the rearing of their children.

People who have large families are not always the kindest to children.

A man who will desert a wife because she is childless would not be reliable if her health were undermined with excessive child-bearing.

The man who ignores the obligation to his offspring, and to the mother, commits a crime next to murder.

Pleasure

Pleasure is the Divine seasoning in the diet of life.

The highway of pleasure is crossed by many toll-gates.

The one who has all kinds of pleasure devices has all kinds of troubles.

If you wish to be fashionable you must deny yourself many real comforts.

Wherever there is pleasure there seems to lurk danger.

Pleasure and pain seem to have been accidentally cast in the same mold.

Pleasure comes to us, not as the main aim in life, but as a bi-product of worthy deeds.

Political

There is many a powerful force in politics that represents but a small vote.

There are many things which mean a great force for the future whose very presence now mean temporary defeat.

The question that candidates for office dare not mention, is most to be feared.

We are best pleased with reforms that apply far enough away so as not to affect ourselves.

There is no such thing as wise regulation of a generally acknowledged evil; the only wise thing is persistent opposition.

Psychological

A number of people together will sometimes perform an act that the individual would scorn to do.

If one's enthusiasm is at the right pitch, he can have a good time with that which would ordinarily be considered torture.

The fault a man does not realize he has, is usually an extreme one.

One usually recognizes the least his greatest fault.

It is almost as easy to critize those who are helping us as those who are opposing us.

We feel hurt more to lose on another's judgement than on our own.

Many things are serious only in proportion as we feel them.

Oftimes things are either admired or condemned simply because they are old.

We are usually less charitable of oddities among relatives than among strangers.

Often the one who is practicing an evil seems as contented and happy as the one who is opposing it.

In some particular thing we are apt to differ most strongly with those in whom we have had the most confidence.

We love the calm best after the lashing fury of the storm.

The halo of romance, if it lives a thousand years, resolves itself into the nucleus of truth.

Sentiment, dipped in the blood of martyrs, writes indelibly.

Love likes to pull on the line.

Forbidden minutes are often hours of joy.

The mind delights most in being led through a mystic maze before reaching the open door.

The stimulation of a fight, and the balm of reconciliation in after years, will always have a fascination for men.

The evil itself is not always a greater problem than that with the people who tolerate it.

Religion

Some people are diplomatically pious.

The meanest people are those who mix religion with their meanness.

Oftimes our belief, if in another, we would regard a superstition.

Though a man may have no religion of his own, in a controversy, he will almost invariably defend the religion of his parents.

Atheism has often been caused by religious dogmas, while every step in science broadens our vision of a great Creator.

Oftimes an infidel is simply one who does not believe another's religion.

When religious fervor and passion join forces in a man, he is often more dangerous than a wild beast.

A skeptic in religion is often a great weather prophet.

No matter how fallacious a religion may be, its destruction never satisfies unless replaced by another.

One who is excessively pious after being excessively wicked, will bear watching.

Wickedness sometimes helps to increase the piety of certain people.

Many a person of deep religious fervor falters in pushing a high moral purpose.

An immoral character, glossed with religious pretention, is like a rotton egg with an Easter coloring.

Our religion, in its humanitarian application, does not rise above our civilization.

Sociological

It is not best for two people to try to live together who cannot mend the break of a quarrel.

The bridge of life is built on the scaffold of action, but rests finally on the piers of results.

One who accepts the general ideas of his time gets along smoothest, but he does least for progress.

The main spring of life should be tempered with kindness, but not to weakness, for it is worthless if men do not feel its power.

Most people are too slow to believe, but once you get them going, they believe too much.

Frequently the condemned have better manners than those who condemn.

He is more successful who is always fighting for something than one who spends his time fighting against things.

We are sometimes greatly attached to people of whom we utter many complaints.

Some people who are honest on principle do a great many dishonest acts through selfish impulses.

Some people who are not honest on principle do a great many honest acts through generous impulses.

Where the pressure is heavy look out for leaks.

Sometimes the multitude can be moved to do an ungracious act as well as the individual.

The town bully usually becomes the meekest of citizens.

Most living creatures, if left to reproduce without hindrance, will eventually destroy themselves with their own excess of numbers.

Many things that are unlady-like for a lady to do are ungentlemanly for a gentleman to do.

When a woman ceases to be trusting she ceases to be lovely.

An old lady, if she has lived right, is a crown on the brow of girlhood.

A man's affections are likely to be reached through his passions; a woman's passions are more than likely to be reached through her affections.

To keep a woman in the harbor of safety, protected from the buffeting storms of the sea, she must be anchored to a man, to a home, to children and to religion.

We can place milestones on the highway of our life if we pause occasionally to take an inventory of ourself.

We will become dyspeptic if we diet on past regrets.

We are thankful for what we get in proportion to the denials we have experienced.

Men quickly find a theory that adapts itself to their desires.

About the time we have subdued the fires of youth that threaten to consume us, we find ourselves battling with the infirmities of age.

No man will continue to act contrary to the shape of his head.

Many of the great reforms of society do not come from the upper levels, but from the upheavals of the lower strata.

Our superiority can be proven only by being just and kind to our fellowman.

It is the blackness of a man's heart that prevents him from treating a negro white.

They who would keep other people down are not coming up very fast themselves.

The reason why the Indian has a better social standing than the negro is because he scalped our ancestors instead of permitting them to make a slave of him.

Traits

Some people are so constituted that they get most of their pleasures out of trouble.

Some people in trying to do big things do a great many small things.

Some people have a philosophy of indifference that permits them to be happy regardless of the suffering of others.

Some people exert an influence in the world largely through their ability to make others angry.

One usually recognizes the least his most prominent characteristic.

Some people are always busy without getting to the main point.

Now and then we find a person who is so loyal to his friends that he will do most any kind of a dishonorable act for them.

People who have done mean things together are pretty sure, sooner or later, to say mean things of each other.

Many a person with high sense of honor will, through sheer stubbornness, often subvert the truth.

Some people would rather be robbed by a flatterer than be favored by a critic.

We part with our money most freely to those who are making lots of it.

Many a person who will not lead the way will tramp on your heels if he walks behind you.

Men's acts are quite as often governed by their temperaments as by their judgments.

Some people are governed more by what they dislike than by what they like.

Some men are masculine only; they are rugged, and sometimes grand in their ruggedness, but they lack fine lines.

There is many an "old maid" who is married.

Affection with some women amounts almost to disease.

Some women are feminine only; they are delicate, lace-like, but they are feathers on the highway of life.

A woman thinks smoking a masculine trait and she will excuse anything in a man she thinks masculine.

While a woman is losing confidence in a man she usually is reposing it in another.

Tyranny

A tyrant has the least respect for one whom he can conquer.

There is no tyranny so dangerous as ignorance clothed with sudden power.

A man who will take abuse from a superior will give it to an inferior.

The extent one will encroach on the rights of another depends much on the weight of his wagon.

The more obsequious a man is to one person the more tyrannical he will be to another.

He who always plays for power will often stand on the neck of one person to reach his arms around the neck of another.

Some people try to appear big by trying to make someone else look little.

Virtue

It is surprising how quickly a bad man will find a bad woman.

One way to teach virtue to girls is to teach it to boys.

The libertine has to look back only over fields strewn with the ashes of burned virtue.

Sometimes severity manifests the truest and kindest heart; compare the surgeon with his knife and the betrayer with a box of sweets.

A man with artistic tastes, and no compunction of conscience, makes the most dangerous of libertines.

In testing the virtue of a girl a man usually makes a bad test of himself.

Some people have an idea that virtue exists only where the blood is cold.

There will always be a crop of girls to be taught, that soon as a man ceases to treat them with honor they should cease to treat him with affection.

Vocational

Except in rare instances, and for brief periods of time, the best recreation is work.

There are people who will endure almost any humiliation rather than work.

The man who gives small reward for a small salary will do the same for a large salary.

A young man is not fitted for life's battle until he has met and survived defeat.

One who works hard without good management gets a worse deal than the lazy man.

If you keep too busy to look at time you will not know that it is passing.

It is not best to try to get a living out of the things you want to play with.

The efforts of a boy to avoid labor often sum up more than the original task.

The more some people work the more disorder they put into things.

Many an occupation that seems playful is in reality serious business.

The only time some people hustle is when they realize that they are doing a wrong.

Our ability to accomplish results depends most largely on our enthusiasm.

You can sometimes fill a position well enough to bar promotion.

Time spent with puzzles comes near being wasted, for even if you work them, you land where you started.

We have confidence in an old man when holding a position, but lack confidence in him when he is applying for one.

Freak characteristics may become highly valuable if we will only commercialize them.

When an old man forgets more than a young man, he is not as reliable as the young man.

One may sometimes be occupying an inferior position for other reasons than lack of ability.

Always charge enough for your services so that people will have respect for your calling.

There is something about the farm that preeminently fits a boy to run successfully the gamut of human endeavor.

The farm fits a boy for the city but the city does not fit a boy for the farm.

There is ample room for any man's genius between poverty and the general interests of humanity.

It is necessary to dress well to command a high price for professional services.

Stripped of ideals, mere money making is among the coarsest of occupations.

War

Strength, if not used to protect, is but weakness.

It would be as imprudent for a nation to make itself rich without means of defense as for a bank to be without safes or vaults.

The strongest military nation cannot continue as such if it spurns the golden rule, for other nations will combine against it.

The nation having the strongest war footing can easily find an excuse for going to war.

When people are having internal dissension, they are glad for an excuse to unite against a foreign foe.

The two most potent causes of war are a high birthrate and the arrogant assumption that a so-called superior civilization has the right to destroy a (presumed) inferior people.

It is hard to move forward and have peace.

The history of the human race always has been, and most likely always will be, that of evolution and revolution.

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